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THE

# PRESS,

A

# POEM.

PUBLISHED AS A SPECIMEN OF TYPOGRAPHY.

*BY JOHN M^cCREERY.*

Liverpool:

PRINTED BY J. M^cCREERY, HOUGHTON-STREET.

AND SOLD BY

CADELL AND DAVIES, STRAND, LONDON.

1803.

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TO

WILLIAM ROSCOE, ESQ.

THE

FOLLOWING WORK,

THE PRODUCTION OF A PRESS

WHICH

HE HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL

IN

ESTABLISHING,

IS

INSCRIBED,

AS A TESTIMONY OF GRATITUDE

AND

RESPECT,

BY

HIS FAITHFUL FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

# PREFACE.

As some apology seems to be necessary for thus obtruding myself on public notice in the two-fold character of author and printer, I cannot make that apology more effectually, or more conscientiously, than by disclosing the motives which inspired me with a zeal for the improvement of the art which I profess, and of the means which situation and friendship have afforded me of attaining, as far as I have attained, the object of my pursuit.

Previous to the time which presented me with an opportunity of carrying those means into effect, I felt a strong conviction,

that it was in the power of our art to produce a degree of elegance, which, as far as my observations extended, had not at that period been exhibited. I was however afterwards surprized and pleased to find that excellence, which was to me only in distant prospect, already attained, in some of the early specimens of the superior typography of Mr. Bulmer and Mr. Bensley.

An unexpected event at length started me in the race of improvement; but, although Liverpool is perhaps to be considered as second only to London in population and in wealth, yet I must remark, that the encouragement which it can afford, has not enabled me to proceed by such rapid strides, as to enter into competition with those who are urged forward by the taste and spirit of the metropolis. In that great centre of all the professions connected with our art, the printer can speedily avail himself of every assistance of which he may stand in need, but which is not to be procured, whatever sacrifices he might be inclined to make, by the artist who attempts improvement in a provincial town, especially in one so remotely situated as Liverpool. Other circumstances, which it is unnecessary to enumerate, give a preponderancy to the capital, which it is impossible for those who reside in the country to oppose.

The extraordinary efforts which have of late years been made to produce the finest models of Printing Types, must be highly gratifying to those who have in any measure interested themselves in raising the credit of the BRITISH PRESS. The spirit for this species of beauty has long been gaining an ascendancy, having received a strong impulse from the talents of BASKERVILLE, who endeavoured to combine sharpness and perfection of impression, with graceful types, giving to his works a finish which was before unknown in this kingdom. MR. MARTIN, whose abilities are so conspicuously displayed in the productions of the SHAKSPEARE PRESS, is a pupil of that celebrated school. By the liberality of GEORGE NICOL, ESQ. I am enabled to boast of being the first who has participated with MR. BULMER in the use of these types, a mark of kindness for which my warmest acknowledgments are the least recompense he has a right to expect.

Another source of ornament which has added much to the value and to the powers of the Printing Press, arises from the perfection to which WOOD ENGRAVING has been carried. To MESSRS. THOMAS and JOHN BEWICK, of NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, (the latter of whom I lament to remark is now beyond the reach of human praise) we are indebted for the cultivation of this most

interesting and beautiful art, which before their day was considered as incapable of producing that effect, which their labours display upon almost all occasions, and by which we are enabled to embellish our works by one operation only, in a manner that produces more harmony, than can be the result of a combination of two arts, in so many respects dissimilar, as those of Letter-Press and Copper-Plate Printing. This is more apparent, when we examine the works of those celebrated and ingenious artists who have received the rudiments of their instruction in that school, all of whom seem actuated by a strong desire to excel, pursuing different, and yet untrodden paths, to celebrity and public notice. Of the abilities of Mr. Henry Hole, one of these pupils, the ornaments with which this work is embellished, will, it is hoped, be considered as a satisfactory proof; and the public will doubtless perceive, that I have not omitted to procure the assistance of an artist of the first character for the execution of the designs, the whole of which are from the masterly pencil of Mr. John Thurston.

Until these our days of Fine Printing, when some of our profession have succeeded in making an Ink that can enable them to do justice to the workmanship of those blocks, all the endeavours of the artist in the higher branches of engraving

were fruitless; and even at present, the country contains very few printers who can take off such an impression, as shall exhibit throughout the whole what the engraver would call beauty, or bring out the effect that he had been labouring to produce. To supply the want of this article, as far as relates to myself, I have had recourse to experiments, many of which have been of an expensive and troublesome nature; my exertions have been directed to the production of richness and warmth of colouring, rather than to that deep and glaring black, which displeases whilst it fatigues and injures the eye. For my success in this undertaking, I must refer to the production which I now offer as a specimen.

With respect to the subject of the poem which I presume to lay before the public, I have to observe, that where I have had occasion to mention the original seat of our art, and its first inventor, I have contented myself with embracing the popular opinion upon that subject; indeed, from the opportunity which I have had of examining the controversy that exists between MENTZ and HAERLEM, I have no scruple in attributing to the former of these places, and to JOHN GUTTEMBERG, all the honour which is attendant upon so great an event. In paying a tribute

to the genius of the Founder of the British Press, I have not thought proper to rob Caxton of that honour, or to raise a doubt in favour of Oxford and Corsellis, though Palmer and others have attempted to prove, on the authority of Atkins, the supposed Lambeth Record, and the work entitled *Exposicio Sancti Jeronimi in Simbolum Apostolorum ad Papam Laurentium,* with the date of Oxford, 1468, that it was practised in that university some years before it was known to have been carried on in Westminster Abbey; which is however with great strength and ingenuity of argument, refuted by Dr. Middleton, in his researches into that subject.—His reasoning upon which I have taken the liberty to subjoin at length in a note.

In tracing the benefits which might result to the world from the respectability of an Art, peculiarly intended to spread around the efforts of the human mind, and in noticing the abuses which tend to destroy its usefulness, or reduce it to slavery, I hope I shall not be accused of having stooped to throw out personal allusions, or condemned for that indignation which I could not restrain, when it became necessary to speak of those who hold at their disposal a machine, capable of conferring so much happiness or so much misery upon mankind.

It is not without considerable anxiety that I offer to public inspection this poem, the production of those hours that I have been able to snatch from avocations of a more important nature to myself and my family—the Reader will, I hope, bear in remembrance, that it is not exhibited as the offspring of academic study, or uninterrupted leisure, but is chiefly intended for that purpose which the title page has already sufficiently expressed.

## *ARGUMENT.*

*ADDRESS to the Shade of Guttemberg—State of man before the invention of Letters—Efforts of Ambition to perpetuate his fame—Birth of Letters—Tribute to the memory of those who first applied themselves to study—Awaking of Science—Astronomy, Painting, Sculpture, Poetry, began to improve—Celebrated Characters who flourished before the invention of Printing—The office of Scribe among the ancients—Libraries instituted—Printing discovered at Mentz by Guttemberg—described—Faust and Schœffer assist him—The former invents moveable Types—Thrown into prison at Paris under suspicion of dealing with the Devil—Diffusion of the art over the continent of Europe—Caxton introduces it into England—Practises it in Westminster Abbey—Origin of the Printer's Chapel—Respectable mention of celebrated Printers—Apostrophe to Warriors on their abuse of the Press—Characters by whom the art is degraded—Prostitution of the Public Journals—Pitt's Statue, and his hostility against the Liberty of the Press—Bonaparte tramples on the Rights of Man, and extinguishes the Freedom of the Press in France—Conclusion.*

## THE PRESS.

SIRE of our Art, whose genius first design'd
This great memorial of a daring mind,
And taught the lever with unceasing play
To stop the waste of time's destructive sway,
The verse—O great Progenitor! be thine,
Late, but sincere, where all thy worth shall shine;
What Printer ever since thy distant days
Hath touch'd the strings responsive to thy praise?

With trembling hand the boon let me bestow,
Hear then ye nations what to him ye owe.
Say what was man ere by the Press refin'd,
What bonds his glorious energies confin'd?
Did genius, thro' the dull chaotic waste,
Court the fair forms of beauty and of taste,
Tho' strong his ardour and tho' pure his love,
Small was the sphere wherein those powers could move.
The meteor beam that science lent mankind,
Darting effulgence on th' inquiring mind,
Oft gleam'd—a weak and transitory light,
A moment glar'd—then sunk in endless night:
Man knew no means to hold the flitting race
Of art's coy forms, that courted his embrace,
His only hope in memory's stinted power,
The oral record—changing every hour.

In early times, our PRESS as yet unknown,
The artist carved his hieroglyphick stone;
The lasting pile Ambition sought to raise,
To gratify his ardent thirst of praise;
Whilst round him mouldering ruins mock'd his care,
And shew'd th' oblivious fate his toil must share;
Whilst Genius pensive sat—in thought profound,
Mourning the spoils of ages scatter'd round.
Benighted reason slumber'd in the breast,
Lull'd by the gloom of ignorance to rest;
The trackless age with rapid pinion flew,
And drop'd the veil that clos'd the distant view.

Muse—to my pensive hours for ever dear,
With brighter scenes my languid spirits cheer,
From man unletter'd as I willing turn,
Let me the guardian hand of Heaven discern;

Blest be his shade in endless realms of light,
Who bade the Alphabet dispel our night;
Those wond'rous symbols that can still retain
The phantom forms that pass along the brain,
O'er unsubstantial thought hold strong controul,
And fix the essence of the immortal soul.
Man unreluctant meets the general doom,
His mind embalm'd, defies th' o'erwhelming tomb,
Lives in fresh vigour thro' succeeding years,
Nor yields its powers whilst nature guides the spheres.

Where swelling Nile his fertilizing stores
O'er thirsty Egypt unexhausted pours,
Where Plenty—rising from the reeking soil,
Bends with the load that asks no human toil,
And every charm luxuriant nature brings,
Spontaneous from her teeming bosom springs,

Industrious science form'd the great design,
To range in words the alphabetic sign;
On language permanence and life bestow'd,
Of written thought the first rude efforts shew'd:
And as the rays of morning's golden eye
Streak with resplendent light the eastern sky,
So with mild beam the sun of learning rose,
That round us now a noontide lustre throws.
Immortal spirits! ye who first could feel
For learning's pure delights a holy zeal;
Who first the ever-wasting lamp renew'd,
Wrapt in the joys of thoughtful solitude;
And rais'd the temple on eternal base,
To knowledge sacred and the human race;
Thro' drear oblivion's boundless vortex tost,
Sages! we mourn your great productions lost;

Yet be your worth in every distant clime
Acknowledged thro' the thickening mists of time.

Now Science, rising from her trance profound,
Benignant calls her numerous children round;
As study wills—commands them to impart
The secret means that shew her wonderous art.

Astronomy—in Heavenly beauty bright,
Trac'd the pure glories of celestial light;
Where clustering worlds in countless numbers throng,
To distant systems distant suns belong;
Beheld the flaming comet's course sublime,
And rolling orbs that mark the lapse of time—
With her, thro' nature's works the mortal soar'd,
Then sunk astonish'd and his God ador'd.

Perspective soon to Painting lent her aid;
Her mellowing tints in softening distance fade;

The beamy forms more captivating shone,
Thro' the dull gloom by shapeless shadow thrown.
Whate'er the skill that guides the immortal hand,
Fate but a moment leaves at his command.
The kindred Muse no irksome bondage fears,
Her song the great events of circling years.

'Twas then the Sculptor sought a nobler goal;
Strong emulation fir'd his ardent soul,
Celestial beauty wondering at his art,
As from the block her sister angels start.

Bewitching Verse her mild enchantments threw,
The fine nerve trembling as her spells she drew;
Enliven'd by her harp's symphonious sound
Gay Fancy's airy offspring sported round.

Led by this band in paths untrod before,
Man sought the depths of nature's boundless store;

As dropt the film from his obstructed sight,
And ignorance fled in deepest shades of night,
He saw the gifts conferr'd by bounteous Heaven,
Felt the strong impulses to reason given,
And still, as taste inspir'd or genius will'd,
The arduous aim, the high behest fulfill'd.

Delightful task, to trace the rolls of fame,
Rich in the trust of many an honour'd name,
The lights that with such various splendour shone,
Ere to the world our glorious art was known—
First he—who found on Sinai's mountain plac'd
The decalogue—by God's own finger trac'd;
Lycurgus too, who calm in Spartan bowers,
Matur'd profound his legislative powers;
And he—the sage whom virtue must revere,
Great Solon, to Athenian freedom dear.

Thou Father, erst—who with celestial fire,
Woke to immortal strains the Grecian lyre,
And thro' thy country led the wondering throng,
Enraptur'd with thy bold heroic song;
As all the passions rose at thy command,
A God! they cried—directs that powerful hand.
Next Sappho wild—with love and verse inspir'd,
Told the mad passion that her bosom fir'd;
Anacreon—steep'd in love's delusive dream,
Sung the pure joys of wine's bewitching stream;
And he—who won from fame the high reward,
The Mantuan Virgil, sweetest Roman bard;
And Horace keen, who love and satire join'd,
With raging Juvenal of fiery mind.

Demosthenes, on whose persuasive tongue
The awful spells of elocution hung,

Scorning his thankless country's venal strife,
Seiz'd the drugg'd bowl to end the woes of life;
And Tully, thou of yet more hapless fate,
The victim of a foul corrupted state;
To save the miscreant who could bid thee bleed,
Why did thy powerful voice so well succeed?

Cease toil that asks for greater powers than mine,
While hosts like these in endless glory shine;
Nor thou my Muse a partial list select,
And names unnumber'd leave to cold neglect;
Not thine the skill, whate'er thy heart may feel,
To trace their labours or their worth reveal;
As well attempt, with mad adventurous lay,
To sing each star that throngs the milky way.

Fathers of Science! who with careful hand
Planted the germs in every distant land,

And mid the barbarous waste of elder times
Foster'd the tender shoots in cheerless climes,
Your ceaseless labours man shall still regard,
Tho' scant the harvest which those toils reward;
Unknown the matchless powers which we possess,
Unknown the PRINTER and unknown his PRESS.

Incessant strove the Scribe's industrious race,
Lingering and labouring with uncertain pace;
Slow from his hands the works of genius came;
His proudest use to feed the unsteady flame;
So greatly circumscrib'd his power appears,
A volume oft hath ask'd the toil of years.
The intellectual feast for wealth prepar'd,
With humble life no generous bounty shar'd,
Depriv'd, by pallid want's depressing power,
Of cultivated thought's delusive hour;

And as dull labour toil'd the livelong day,
The unconscious soul in stupid dozings lay.

Yet why despise in cold unfeeling strain
The means by which such glorious works remain?
Or blame the hoarding spirit that confin'd
To private use the early fruits of mind?
Soon swell'd with nobler aim the generous heart,
As letters spread their humanizing art;
When gorgeous fanes and palaces inclos'd
The sacred trust—for public use dispos'd,
Collected knowledge ope'd her ample stores,
Which yet the eye of curious search explores,
And left—to call the powers of genius forth,
Those great memorials of surpassing worth.

O MENTZ! proud city, long thy fame enjoy,
For with the PRESS thy glory ne'er shall die,

Still may thy guardian battlements withstand
The ruthless shock of war's destructive hand;
Where GUTTEMBERG with toil incessant wrought
The imitative lines of written thought;
And as his art a nobler effort made,
The sweeping lever his commands obey'd;
Elastic balls the sable stains supply;
Light o'er the form the sheeted tympans fly;
The beauteous work returning leaves unfold,
As with alternate force the axle roll'd.

His bosom now unbounded joys expand,
A printed volume owns his forming hand;
The curious work from sculptur'd blocks imprest,
The rising glories of his art confest.

To give to distant times a name more dear,
To spread the blessing thro' a wider sphere,

Schœffer and Faust with kindling ardour fir'd,
Lent the strong aid that thirst of fame inspir'd;
The stubborn block, with rude unchanging form,
One end could answer, but one task perform,
Till Faust, with all his powers of genius ripe,
Struck the fine die, and cast the moving type,
That ever, as the curious artist will'd,
In some new station some new office fill'd.

A host of Scribes whose slow progressive art
No public use to genius could impart,
Astonish'd saw with what profusive hand
The Press could send its labours thro' the land;
And mark'd—whilst deeper wonder all confest,
The strong identity that each possest;—
How power and ignorance their prey pursue
He felt—to whom our second praise is due,

When the new treasure FAUST to Gallia bore,
Her sons with jealous eyes the work explore;
The capital convulsive terror shook,
Scared at the numbers of the sacred book;
Nor could the holy theme their fears dispel
Of some foul dealings with the guests of hell.—
Forth to the awful judgment hall they sped,
And bound in chains the culprit artist led.
A pious chief in crozier'd armour drest,
His keen abhorrence of the wretch exprest;
" Thou—who hast dealt with blackest imps below,
" Leagued against man with man's eternal foe,
" Repent—and be to us the means explain'd,
" Say by what art these volumes thou hast gain'd."—
—FAUST with undaunted heart the prelate view'd;
His eye bespoke a spirit unsubdued;

" With no infernal power did I consult,
" Of human labour this the great result."—
—But quickly to the prison's drear abode
They sent the Printer and the Word of God.

With ancient Mentz our central point of art,
In the proud race the neighbouring cities start,
Spreading—as light diverges from its source,
The great invention thro' a distant course;
Thronging around—the candidates for fame,
To breathe new life in countless numbers came,
Prest for the meed which we alone bestow,
The source from which immortal honours flow.

Brothers of old—ye shades that I revere
With strong enthusiastic love sincere,
The task was yours to spread the work around,
To yon great continent's remotest bound;

Th' establishments arose with rapid growth,
Whence SPIRA—JENSON—ALDUS—prov'd their worth.
As we behold upon the pall of night
The starry rays of lucid trembling light,
Well pleas'd Britannia saw—across the stream,
Rising o'er Gallic lands—the cheerful beam,
And long'd to share the renovating blaze,
That could so quick the flowers of genius raise.
O Albion! still thy gratitude confess
To CAXTON, founder of the BRITISH PRESS;
Since first thy mountains rose—or rivers flow'd,
Who on thine isles so rich a boon bestow'd?
Yet stands the chapel in yon Gothic shrine,
Where wrought the Father of our English Line;
Our art was hail'd from kingdoms far abroad,
And cherished in the hallowed house of GOD;

From which we learn the homage it receiv'd,
And how our sires its heavenly birth believ'd;
Each Printer hence, howe'er unblest his walls,
E'en to this day his house a CHAPEL calls.

Time—of the flying years in rapid chase,
Saw our laborious brotherhood increase,
And as his pinion wav'd upon the blast,
Still met again the soul of ages past.
As farther spread our telegraph of mind,
In closer union distant nations join'd;
Thus flourish'd taste as emulation reign'd,
Thus worth and talents their high station gain'd.

From ancient passing on to modern times,
Welcome the names that rise to court my rhymes;
Whom first record—amid so great a throng,
In the rude strains of this inglorious song?

O yield ye living to the great who rest,
Sharing celestial joys among the blest;
Columbia rising into wealth and power,
Unites her fame with FRANKLIN's natal hour.
FRANKLIN—who struck with awe his country's foes,
And great before a venal senate rose.—
Artists who in your humbler stations stand,
Earning your bread by labour's active hand,
He left the lesson to your useful class,
Unheeded shall the great example pass?
Like yours his sinewy arm the lever sway'd,
And independence her blest tribute paid.

O BASKERVILLE! the anxious wish was thine
Utility with beauty to combine;
To bid the o'erweening thirst of gain subside;
Improvement all thy care and all thy pride;

When BIRMINGHAM—for riots and for crimes
Shall meet the long reproach of future times,
Then shall she find amongst our honor'd race,
One name to save her from entire disgrace.

The deep affection that my heart o'erwhelms,
Learn thou BODONI in Italian realms,
May'st thou forget thy country's fallen state,
And fate extend thy life a lengthen'd date;—
Nor DIDOT less—whom France is proud to own,
Tho' stain'd her honour and her freedom gone;—
Say—when your lands with wasting tempest shook,
And peace and hope the awful hour forsook,
What power preserv'd ye mid the bloody scene?
Did not some sheltering ægis intervene?
Ye—as of old the virtuous Meshech—came
Uninjur'd from the dread devouring flame.

Dread warrior chiefs!—who, as the bolt is hurl'd
That spreads destruction o'er a trembling world,
Scour with resistless speed th' ensanguin'd plain,
Where busy Death rejoices o'er the slain!
Our Art enslav'd still aids your wasting course,
Nerving the blood-stain'd arm of lawless force.
O may our race no more the wrongs bewail!
Be free our PRESS as Heaven's enlivening gale!

Pleas'd as we now the grateful strain pursue,
Two sons of science pass before our view,
Who to their works perfection can impart,
And snatch from barbarous hands our sinking art;
Their skill the sharp fine outline still supplies;
From vellum leaves their graceful types arise;
And whilst our breasts the rival hopes expand,
BULMER and BENSLEY well-earn'd praise demand.

How sweet to yield the tribute of applause,
When sterling worth with strong attraction draws;
Or what more pleasing to the feeling mind
Than living wreaths around his brows to bind!
But in our days what hordes of blockheads claim
The proud distinction of the PRINTER's name;
Around his PRESS—like hungry beasts of prey,
They swarm—whom every trade hath cast away;
Without the knowledge that can e'er improve,
The sordid aim their active passions move.
Their servile uses and their country's shame,
How frequent now the public prints proclaim.
The base pursuits that cunning can devise,
Strong advocates their hireling page supplies,
The dread of chains and slavery dispel,
And as they're brib'd th' obedient conscience sell;

Tho' for their crimes and for the common good,
The patriot yet may wade in seas of blood.

Aided by thee—O Art sublime! our race
Spurns the opposing bonds of time and space,
With fame's swift flight to hold an equal course,
And taste the stream from reason's purest source;
Vice, and her hydra sons, thy powers can bind,
And cast in virtue's mould the plastic mind;
Yet some there are—whose dread unhallowed hand,
To deeds of guilt thine energies command,
For giddy youth's unguarded hour prepare
The luring tale—the foul immoral snare.

Ye pests—whose means of daily bread are built
On ignorance and bold unblushing guilt;
Whose tales the unsuspecting wretch decoy,
Of life diseaseless thro' an age of joy;

Strengthening some wayward passion of the mind
With drugs that leave the dire disease behind!
Pills of specific fame—see misery takes—
Hope flies—the slender thread of being breaks;
Lotions that promise ever blooming charms;
The nostrum that the hand of death disarms;
With embryo life can swell the barren womb;
And clothe old age in youth's bewitching bloom;
Drops—syrups—balms—of gold the essence pure,
Gileads and anti-drinks the world allure.
Whate'er compound the artful quack may hatch,
Folly or squalid wretchedness to catch,
Will find the ready vouchers for its worth,
In all the journals that the day brings forth.

O irksome task! in sad desponding strains,
To trace the direful ills our art sustains;

Power's sleepless hosts, impelled by jealous rage,
In guilty fear—th' unnatural warfare wage.—
Call off—O PITT! thy statue-raising bands,
Already formed the threatening monster stands,
Its ponderous base our subjugated PRESS,
Chains and war-trophies well thy deeds express;
Whilst on its head in glistening shew appears,
A diadem of crystallizing tears.
No servile purpose slavery could obtain,
E'er on our annals left so black a stain.—
Thy paper-taxes of o'erwhelming weight,
Have prest upon us like the arm of fate;
Now register'd—now ticketed we move,
Our slightest works the double label prove.
Such rage as thine mad Omar once inspir'd,
Whose hand the Alexandrian treasure fir'd.

And thou dread traitor to the sacred cause,
The source of equal rights and equal laws,
Whose rapid course gigantic strides advance
O'er prostrate justice and o'er conquer'd France;
Whose palsying hands the struggling PRESSES hold;
Whose twisted manacles their forms enfold;
When Gallic valour thunder'd on her foes,
Was it for thine aggrandizement she rose?
Shall man—obedient to thy tyrant nod
Degraded yield the image of his GOD?
But worst and foulest of the countless crimes,
That damn thee now and to all future times,
Thy dread command across the western wave
Loads with fresh chains the proud reluctant slave,
And to his quivering lip the cup applies,
Which as he tastes, he sickens and he dies.

Come Friendship, thou that bringst the healing balm
To sooth my feelings, and my spirits calm,
Thou that hath blest me in my humble sphere
With all the joys existence can endear,
And in the rare community hath placed,
By tenderest love—and matchless talents graced,
What more would man on this terrestrial ball—
Our friendships and our home—our world we call;
I see the arts their softening influence shed,
Whilst commerce moves by milder spirits led,
The gentle passions thro' her bosom steal,
With angel smiles for man she learns to feel.
Grateful to me when memory appears,
Raising the shadows of my former years,
To hail the great productions of my Press,
Spreading the mind that distant times shall bless.

Lamented Bard—who late on Mersey's shore,
Delighted listen'd to the surges roar,
Fortune—relenting—bade thy spirits hail,
When thy last notes were trembling on the gale.
And Rushton—thou—whose independent soul,
Nor ills of life—nor adverse fates controul,
Tho' solemn darkness shroud thine orbs of sight,
Strong are thy beams of intellectual light,
For like immortal Milton—thine the doom,
To strike thy harp amid the cheerless gloom.
Him too I sing—who by Cam's classic stream,
Enjoys the visions of the poet's dream,
Whose lyric muse by rapturous thought inspir'd,
A noble effort of my art requir'd.
Pleas'd I Lorenzo—Burns—and Poggio claim,
While taste and genius charm, still dear to fame ;

Come Friendship, thou that bringst the healing balm
To sooth my feelings, and my spirits calm,
Thou that hast blest me in my humble sphere
With all the joys existence can endear,
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Lamented Bard—who late on Mersey's shore,
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A noble effort of my art requir'd.
Pleas'd I Lorenzo—Burns—and Poggio claim,
While taste and genius charm, still dear to fame ;

And may my hours with like employment glide
Smooth down the channel of life's ebbing tide;
Be such the task as it hath been of late,
When Currie mourn'd the hapless Poet's fate,
Or Rathbone when his voice inspires the throng,
Or Roscoe pours his soul in freedom's song.

# NOTES.

*Where Guttemberg with toil incessant wrought*
*The imitative lines of written thought.*

*Page* 13.

THE following passages, extracted from Palmer, are given as an apology for having assigned to Guttemberg, in the foregoing poem, the honor of the original invention. " Of all the authors to whom the world is in-
" debted for a particular account of this discovery, Abbot Trithemius
" justly claims the pre-eminence, both upon the account of his living
" nearest to the time of this discovery, which he tells us happened in his
" younger years, as well as for his care to derive his intelligence from its
" origin. We have two noble testimonies out of his Chronicle; the one
" from the first part, entitled, *Chronicon Spanheimense*, where, speaking of
" the year 1450, he says, That about this time the art of printing, and

" casting single types, was found out *a-new* in the city of Mentz, by one John " Guttenberg, who having spent his whole estate in this difficult discovery, " by the assistance and advice of some honest men, John Faust and others, " brought his undertaking at length to perfection; that the first improver " of this art, after the inventor, was Peter Schoeffer de Gernsheim, who " afterwards printed a great many volumes: that the said Guttenberg lived " at Mentz, in a house called *Zum-junghen*, but afterwards known by the " name of the Printing-House." * * * The " next passage, which is " fuller, and for its singularity and decisiveness, deserves to be set down " at length, is taken out of the second part of Trithemius's Chronicle, " intitled, *Chronicon Hirsaugiense*—About this time, *anno* 1450, in the " city of Mentz, in Germany, upon the Rhine, and not in Italy, as some " writers falsely affirmed, the wonderful, and *till then unknown* art of print- " ing books by metal types *(characterizandi)* was invented and devised " by John Guttenberg, citizen of Mentz, who having almost exhausted " his whole estate in contriving of this new method, and labouring under " such insuperable difficulties, in one respect or other, that he began to " despair of, and to throw up the whole design; was at length assisted with " the advice and purse of John Faust, another citizen of Mentz, and hap- " pily brought it to perfection. Having therefore begun with cutting cha- " racters of the letters upon wooden planks, in their right order, and com- " pleated their forms, they printed the vocabulary called *Catholicon*; " but could make no farther use of those forms, because there was no " possibility of separating the letters, which were engraven on the planks, " as we hinted before. To this succeeded a more ingenious invention; for " they found out a way of stamping the shapes of every letter of the " Latin alphabet, in what they call matrices, from which they afterwards " cast their letters, either in copper or tin, hard enough to be printed " upon, which they first cut with their own hands. It is certain that " this art met with no small difficulties from the beginning of its inven- " tion, as I heard thirty years ago from the mouth of Peter Schoeffer de " Gernsheim, citizen of Mentz, and *Son-in-law to the first Inventor of the* " *Art.* For when they went about printing the Bible, before they had " worked off the third quire, it had cost them already above 4000 florins.

" But the aforementioned Peter Schoeffer, then servant, and afterwards " son-in-law to the first inventor, John Faust, as we hinted before, being " a person of great ingenuity, discovered an easier method of casting " letters, and perfected the art as we now have it. These three kept " their manner of printing very secret for some time, until it was di- " vulged by their servants, without whose help it was impossible to ma- " nage the business, who carried it, first to Strasburg, and by degrees all " over Europe.—Thus much will suffice concerning the discovery of " this wonderful art, the first inventors of which were citizens of Mentz. " These three first discoverers of Printing, viz. (here Guttenberg is placed at the head of the enumeration) " John Guttenberg, John Faust, and " Peter Schoeffer, his son-in-law, lived at Mentz, in a house called " *Zum-junghen*, but ever since known by the name of the Printing- " House." *Palmer's General History of Printing*, *b.* i. *chap.* iii. *p.* 9, 12.

From Luckombe's *History and Art of Printing*, a work compiled with much care, the following is selected, which may serve to throw some further light upon this subject.—" The original instrument, which is " dated *Nov.* 6*th*, 1455, is decisive in favour of Guttemberg; but the " honor of single types, made of metal, is ascribed to Faust, wherein he " received great assistance from his servant and son-in-law, Peter Schoeffer, " who devised the punches, matrices, and moulds for casting them, on " which account he was taken into partnership by his father-in-law, who, " in 1455, had a quarrel with, and separated from Guttemberg; those " who have asserted that Faust was the first inventor of Printing, have " given for a reason, that they have never seen any book with Guttem- " berg's name to it; without considering, that their first essays in print- " ing, both by blocks and moveable types, being sold for manuscripts. " were anonymous, the invention being by them intended to be kept " secret, nor was it divulged till their disagreement, by which time Faust " had made himself master of the art, and Guttemberg was not able to " proceed in it alone, owing to his circumstances.

" There is at Mentz, on the front of the house wherein Guttemberg " lived, the following inscription, which was put up in the year 1507.

JOANNI GUTTEMBERGENSI
MOGUNTINO,
QUI PRIMUS OMNIUM LITERAS ÆRE
IMPRIMENDAS INVENIT,
HAC ARTE DE ORBE TOTO BENE MERENTI;
YVO VINTEGENSIS
HOC SAXUM PRO MONUMENTO POSUIT."

" *Leagued against man with man's eternal foe.*

*Page* 15.

In this adventure we seem to have the origin of the opinion, that Printers have occasion for the assistance of a supernatural personage in the progress of their labours, with whom all the rest of the world is most anxious to avoid any very intimate acquaintance. Had we no other complaints against his Satanic Majesty, than that of assisting John Faust to bring to perfection the Art of Printing—we certainly should have no right to stigmatize him as a being of so malignant a disposition as he is commonly represented. The PRINTER'S DEVIL is a character almost identified with the origin of the art, and we may consider ourselves peculiarly fortunate in having a guardian exclusively assigned to us, from whom, notwithstanding his general bad conduct to other people, we have so little to apprehend, and who is commonly our faithful assistant, both in our labours and in our pleasures. From hence also the legend of the *Devil and Doctor Faustus.*

*—But quickly to the prison's drear abode*
*They sent the Printer and the Word of God.*

*Page* 16.

" Faust finding himself imposed upon by Guttenberg, and disap- " pointed of the money expected, and wanting either will or power to " sue him in that city where he fled, formed a stratagem to raise himself " a fresh supply, which succeeded according to his wishes; for he went to " Paris, with some of his finest vellum Bibles, one of which was sold to

" the king for 750 crowns, and is still to be seen in the royal library " at Paris, a master-piece in that kind, another was bought by the arch- " bishop of Paris for 300 crowns, but as people were unwilling to " give so exorbitant a price, he offered some of the last for 50 crowns " and less, in hopes to have disposed of them all before he was discovered. " It is not indeed to be supposed, that they were all equal in the orna- " mental part; yet the beauty of the work, the elegancy of the flower " pieces, initial letters, &c. the variety of the finest colours, intermixed " with gold and silver, with which they were exquisitely variegated, " made the purchasers fond of shewing them to their acquaintance; as " every one thought the whole world could not produce such ano- " ther. 'Tis reported that the archbishop, thinking his Bible worth " his Majesty's seeing, carried it to him, who viewed it with surprize, " and in return shewed his own: upon a stricter examination, and " comparing them together, they found that the ornaments were not " exactly the same; but as to the other part, supposed to be written, " they observed such a conformity in the number of the pages, lines, " and words, and even letters, as soon convinced them that they were done " by some other method than transcribing; besides, two such Bibles " were the work of a man's life-time to transcribe; and upon inquiry, he " was found to have sold a much greater number. Hereupon orders were " given to apprehend *Faustus*, and prosecute him as a *Conjurer*. * * * How- " ever, the parliament of Paris thought fit to make an arrest in favour of him, " and to discharge him from all further prosecution, in consideration of " his noble invention; and as I am credibly informed, a salary was paid by " that crown to Faust's descendants for many years after, as a reward for " his sufferings and merit; this was the end and success of that expedition, " and proved at length very advantageous to him, and made some amends " for the melancholy hours of his confinement, and the terrors of approach- " ing death."—*Palmer's General History of Printing*, *b.* i. *chap.* x. *p.* 87, 89.

*To Caxton, founder of the British Press.*

*Page* 17.

" It was a constant opinion," says Dr. Middleton, in his Dissertation

on the Origin of Printing in England, " delivered down by our historians, " that the *Art of Printing was introduced and first practised in England by* " *William Caxton, a mercer and citizen of London,* who by his travels abroad, " and a residence of many years in Holland, Flanders, and Germany, in " the affairs of trade, had an opportunity of informing himself of the " whole method and process of the art; and by the encouragement of the " great, and particularly of the Abbot of Westminster, first set up a press " in that Abbey, and began to print books soon after the year MCCCCLXXI.

" This was the tradition of our writers, till a book, which had scarce " been observed before the restoration, was then taken notice of by the " curious, with a date of its impression, from Oxford, anno MCCCCLXVIII, " and was considered immediately as a clear proof and monument of the " exercise of printing in that university, several years before Caxton be- " gan to deal in it.

" The book, which is in our public library, (Cambridge) is a small " volume of forty-one leaves, in quarto, with this title—*Exposicio Sancti* " *Jeronimi in Simbolum Apostolorum ad Papam Laurentium:* and at the " end, *Explicit exposicio,* &c. *Impressa Oxonie, & finita anno domini* " M.CCCC.LXVIII. XVII. *die Decembris.*

" The appearance of this book has robbed Caxton of a glory that he " had long possessed, of being the author of printing to this kingdom, and " Oxford ever since carried the honour of the first press. The only dif- " ficulty was, to account for the silence of history in an event so memora- " ble, and the want of any memorial in the university itself, concerning " the establishment of a new art amongst them, of such use and benefit to " learning. But this likewise has been cleared up, by the discovery of a " Record, which had lain obscure and unknown at Lambeth-House, in the " register of the See of Canterbury, and gives a narrative of the whole " transaction, drawn up at the very time.

" An account of this Record was first published in a thin quarto volume

" in English, with this title—*The Original and Growth of Printing, collected
" out of History, and the Records of this Kingdom: wherein is also demon-
" strated, that Printing appertaineth to the Prerogative Royal, and is a Flower
" of the Crown of England.* By Richard Atkyns, Esq. London, 1664.

" It sets forth in short, that as soon as the *Art of Printing* made some
" noise in Europe, Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury, moved
" king Henry VI. to use all possible means to procure it to be brought
" into England. The king approving the proposal, dispatched one Mr.
" Robert Turnour, an officer of the robes, into Flanders, furnished with
" money for the purpose; who took to his assistance William Caxton, a
" man of abilities, and knowledge of the country; and these two found
" means to bribe and entice over into England one Frederick Corsellis, an
" under-workman in the printing-house at Harlem, where John Guttemberg
" had lately invented the art, and was then personally at work; which
" Corsellis was immediately sent down to Oxford, under a guard, to prevent
" his escape, and to oblige him to the performance of his contract, where
" he produced the piece above mentioned, but without any name of printer.
" Those who have not the opportunity of consulting Atkins's book, which
" is not common, may find the story more at large in Mr. Maittaire's
" *Annals*, or Palmer's *History of Printing*, *&c.*

" From the authority of this record, all our later writers declare
" Corsellis to be the first printer in England; Mr. Anthony Wood, the
" learned Mr. Maittaire, Palmer, and one Bagford, an industrious man, who
" had published *Proposals for an History of Printing*, and whose manu-
" script papers were communicated to me by my worthy and learned friend
" Mr. Baker. But it is strange that a piece so fabulous, and carrying such
" evident marks of forgery, could impose upon men so knowing and
" inquisitive.

" For *first*, the fact is laid quite wrong as to time; near the end of
" Henry the Sixth's reign, and in the very heat of the civil wars, when it
" is not credible that a prince, struggling for life, as well as his crown,

" should have leisure or disposition to attend to a project that could hardly " be thought of, much less executed, in times of such calamity. The " Printer, it is said, was graciously received by the king, made one of " his sworn servants, and sent down to Oxford with a guard, &c. all " which must have passed before the year 1459, for Edward IV. was " proclaimed in London, in the end of it, according to our computa- " tion, on the 4th of March, and crowned about the midsummer following; " and yet we have no fruit of all this labour and expense till near ten years " after, when the little book, described above, is supposed to have been " published from that press.

" *Secondly*—The silence of Caxton concerning a fact in which he is " said to be a principal actor, is a sufficient confutation of it; for it was " a constant custom with him, in the prefaces or conclusions of his " works, to give an historical account of all his labours and transactions, " as far as they concerned the publishing and printing of books. And, " what is still stronger, in *the continuation of the Polychronicon*, com- " piled by himself, and carried down to the end of Henry the Sixth's " reign, he makes no mention of the expedition in quest of a Printer, " which he could not have omitted, had it been true, whilst in the same " book he takes notice of the invention and beginning of printing in the " city of Mentz; which I shall make some use of by and by.

" There is a further circumstance in Caxton's history, that seems in- " consistent with the record; for we find him still beyond sea, about " twelve years after the supposed transaction, learning with great charge " and trouble the art of printing, which he might have done with ease at " home, if he had got Corsellis into his hands, as the record imports, " so many years before. But he probably learnt it at Cologn, where he " resided in 1471, and whence books had been first printed with date the " year before.

" To the silence of Caxton, we may add that of the Dutch writers; for " it is very strange, as Mr. Chevillier observes, if the story of the Record

" be true, that Adrian Junius, who has collected all the groundless ones " that favour the pretensions of Harlem, should never have heard of it.

" But *thirdly*, the most direct and internal proof of its forgery, is its " ascribing the origin of Printing to Harlem; where John Guttemberg, " the inventor, is said to have been personally at work, when Corsellis was " brought away, and the art itself to have been first carried to Mentz by a " brother of one of Guttemberg's workmen, for it is certain, beyond all " doubt, that printing was first invented and propagated from Mentz. " Caxton's testimony seems alone to be decisive, who, in the continuation " of the *Polychronicon*, says, " About this time *(viz. anno* 1455*)* the crafte " of emprynting was first found out in Mogounce in Almayne, &c." " He " was abroad in the very country, and at the time, when the first project " and thought of it began, and the rudest essays of it were attempted; " where he continued for thirty years, viz. from 1441 to 1471, and, as he " was particularly curious and inquisitive after this new art, of which he " was endeavouring to get a perfect information, he could not be ignorant " of the place where it was first exercised. This confutes what Palmer " conjectures, to confirm the credit of the record; that the compiler might " take up with the common report that passed current at the time in " Holland in favour of Harlem, or probably receive it from Caxton himself. " For it does not appear that there was any such report at the time, nor " many years after, and Caxton, we see, was better informed from his " own knowledge, and had Palmer been equally curious, he could not " have been ignorant of this testimony of his in the very case.

" Besides the evidence of Caxton, we have another contemporary " authority, from the *Black Book*, or Register of the Garter, published " by Mr. Anstis, where, in the thirty-fifth year of Henry VI. *anno* 1457, " it is said, " In this Year of our most pious King, the Art of Printing " Bookes first began at Mentz, a famous city of Germany."

" Fabian, likewise, the writer of the Chronicle, an author of good " credit, who lived at the same time with Caxton, though some years

" younger, says, " This yere (*viz.* 35th Henry VI.) after the opynyon of " dyverse wryters, began in a Citie of Almaine, namyd Mogunce, the crafte " of empryntynge Bokys, which sen that tyme hath had wonderful en- " creace." " These three testimonies have not been produced before, that " I know of; two of them were communicated to me by Mr. Baker, who of " all men is the most able, as well as the most willing, to give information " in every point of curious and uncommon history.

* * * * * * *

" But to return to the Lambeth Record, as it was never heard of before " the publication of Atkins's book, so it has never since been seen or " produced by any man, though the registers of Canterbury, have, on " many occasions been diligently and particularly searched for it. They " were examined without doubt, very carefully, by Archbishop Parker, " for the compiling his Antiquities of the British Church, where, in the " Life of Thomas Bourchier, though he congratulates that age on the " noble and useful invention of printing, yet he is silent as to the intro- " duction of it into England. By the endeavours of that Archbishop; " nay, his giving the honor of the invention to Strasburg, clearly " shews, that he knew nothing of the story of Corsellis conveyed from " Harlem, and that the record was not in being in his time. Palmer him- " self owns, that it is not to be found there now; for that the late Earl of " Pembroke assured him, that he had employed a person for some time to " search for it, but in vain.

" On these grounds we may pronounce the Record to be a forgery; " though all the writers above-mentioned take pains to support its credit, " and call it an authentic piece.

" Atkins, who by his manner of writing seems to have been a bold and " vain man, might possibly be the inventor; for he had an interest in im- " posing it upon the world, in order to confirm the argument of his book, " that Printing was of the prerogative royal, in opposition to the company " of stationers, with whom he was engaged in an expensive suit of law, in " defence of the king's patents, under which he claimed some exclusive

" powers of printing. For he tells us, that upon considering the thing, " he could not but think that a public person, more eminent than a mer- " cer, and a public purse, must needs be concerned in so public a good, " and the more he considered, the more inquisitive he was to find out the " truth. So that he had formed his hypothesis before he had found his " Record; which he published, he says, as a friend to truth; not to suffer " one man to be entituled to the worthy atchievements of another; and as " a friend to himself, not to lose one of his best arguments of intituling the " king to this art. But, if Atkins was not himself the contriver, he was " imposed upon at least by some more crafty, who imagined that his in- " terest in the cause, and the warmth that he shewed in prosecuting it, " would induce him to swallow for genuine, whatever was offered of the " kind.

" We have now cleared our hands of the Record; but the book stands " firm, as a monument of the exercise of printing in Oxford six years older " than any book of Caxton with date. The fact is strong, and what in " ordinary cases passes for certain evidence of the age of books; but in " this, there are such contrary facts to balance it, and such circumstances to " turn the scale, that to speak my mind freely, I take the date in question " to have been falsified originally by the printer, either by design or mis- " take, and an x to have been dropt or omitted in the age of the impression.

" Examples of the kind are common in the history of printing. I " have observed several dates altered very artfully after publication, to give " them the credit of greater antiquity. They have at Harlem, in large " quarto, a translation into Dutch of *Bartholomæus de proprietatibus rerum*, " printed *anno* M.CCCC.XXXV. by *Jacob Bellart*. This they shew to con- " firm their claim to the earliest printing, and deceive the unskilful. But " Mr. Bagford, who had seen another copy with a true date, discovered the " cheat, by which the L had been erased so cunningly, that it was not easy " to perceive it. But besides the frauds of an after-contrivance, there are " many false dates originally given by the printers; partly through design " to raise the value of their works, but chiefly through negligence and

" blunder. There is a Bible at Ausburg, of *anno* 1449, where the two " last figures are transposed, and should stand thus, 1494. Chevillier " mentions three more, one of Paris, *anno* 1443; another at Lyons, 1446; a " third at Basil, 1450; though printing was not used in any of these places " till many years after. Orlandi describes three books with the like mistake " from Mentz. And Jo. Koelhoff, who first printed about the year 1470, " at Cologn, has dated one of his books *anno* M.CCCC. with a C omitted; " and another, *anno* 1458; which Palmer imputes to design rather than " mistake.

" But what is most to our point, is a book from the famous printer " Nicolas Jenson; of which Maittaire gave the first notice, called *Decor* " *Puellarum*; printed *anno* M.CCCC.LXI. All the other works of Jenson " were published from Venice, between *anno* 1470 and 1480; which justly " raised a suspicion, that an X had been dropt from the date of this, which " ought to be advanced ten years forward; since it was not credible, that " so great a master of the art, who at once invented and perfected it, could " lie so many years idle and unemployed. The suspicion appeared to be " well grounded, from an edition of Tully's Epistles, at Venice, the first " work of another famed Printer, John de Spira, *anno* 1469, who in the " four following verses, at the end of the book, claims the honour of being " the first who had printed in that city.

" *Primus in Adriaca formis impressit aenis*
" *Urbe libros Spirâ genitus de stirpe Johannes*
" *In reliquis sit quanta, vides, spes, Lector, habenda,*
" *Quum labor hic primus calami Superaverit Artem.*

" It is, I know, the more current opinion, confirmed by the testimony " of contemporary writers, that Jenson was the first printer at Venice. " But these verses of John de Spira, published at the time, as well as the " place, in which they both lived, and in the face of his rival Jenson, " without any contradiction from him, seem to have a weight too great to " be over-ruled by any foreign evidence whatsoever.

" But whilst I am now writing, an unexpected instance has fallen into " my hands, to the support of my opinion ; an inauguration speech of the " Woodwardian Professor, Mr. Mason, just fresh from our press, with its " date given ten years earlier than it should have been, by the omission of " an x, viz. M.DCC.XXIV. and the very blunder exemplified in the last " piece printed at Cambridge, which I suppose to have happened in the " first from Oxford.

" These instances, with many more that might be collected, shew the " possibility of my conjecture; and, for the probability of it, the book " itself affords sufficient proof; for, not to insist on what is less material; " the neatness of the letter, and regularity of the page, &c. above those of " Caxton ; it has one mark that seems to carry the matter beyond probable, " and to make it even certain, viz. The use of Signatures, or letters of " the alphabet placed at the bottom of the page, to shew the sequel of the " sheets and leaves of each book; an improvement contrived for the direc- " tion of the Bookbinders ; which yet was not practised or invented at the " time when this book is supposed to be printed ; for we find no Signatures " in the books of Faust or Schoeffer at Mentz; nor in the more improved " and beautiful impressions of John de Spira and Jenson at Venice, till " several years later. We have a book in our library, that seems to fix the " very time of their invention, at least in Venice ; the place where the art " itself received the greatest improvements, *Baldi lectura super Codic, &c.* " printed by Jo. de Colonia, and Jo. Manthen de Gherretzem, *anno* " M.CCCC.LXX.IIII. It is a large and fair volume in folio, without signa- " tures till about the middle of the book, in which they are first introduced, " and so continue forward, which makes it probable, that the first thought " of them was suggested during the time of the impression: for we have " likewise *Lectura Bartholi super Codic, &c.* in two noble and beautiful " volumes in folio, printed the year before, at the same place, by Vindelin " de Spira, without them; yet from this time forward they are generally " found in all the works of the Venetian printers, and from them propa- " gated to the other printers of Europe. They were used at Cologne, " *anno* 1475; at Paris, 1476; by Caxton not before 1480; but if the dis-

" covery had been brought into England and practised at Oxford twelve " years before, it is not probable that he would have printed so long at " Westminster without them.

" Mr. Palmer, indeed tells us, that Anthony Zarot was esteemed the " inventor of signatures, and that they are found in a Terence, printed " by him at Milan in the year 1470, in which he first printed. I have not " seen this Terence, and can only say, that I have observed the want of " them in some later works of this, as well as of other excellent printers " of the same place. But allowing them to be in the Terence, and Zarot " the inventor, it confutes the date of our Oxford book, as effectually as if " they were of later origin at Venice; as I had reason to imagine, from " the testimony of all the old books that I have hitherto met with.

" What confirms my opinion is, that from the time of the pretended " date of this book, *anno* 1468, we have no other fruit or production from " the press at Oxford for eleven years next following; and it cannot be ima- " gined that a press, established with so much pains and expense, could " be suffered to lie so long idle and useless; whereas, if my conjecture be " admitted, all the difficulties that seem insuperable and inconsistent with " the supposed æra of printing there, will vanish at once. For allowing " the book to have been printed ten years later, *anno* 1478, then the use " of Signatures can be no objection, a foreign printer might import them; " Caxton take them up from him; and the course of printing, and sequel " of books published from Oxford, will proceed regularly." *Middleton's Dissertation on the Origin of Printing in England, v.* iii. *p.* 229. *4to ed. Lond.* 1752.

To the foregoing it may not be improper to subjoin the opinion of Sir James Burrows, who also quotes that of the learned Mr. Bowyer, in contradiction of the very acute reasoning of Dr. Middleton.

" Mr. Bowyer, whose general learning and particular knowledge in his " profession, seem to qualify him for being at least as good a judge of this

" dispute as any man that ever lived, does by no means agree with Dr. " Middleton in this point, of Caxton's priority to the Oxford Book, or in " the arguments adduced by the Doctor in support of his opinion, any " more than he does in the former point, of the place where the art was " first invented and practised abroad. He is of opinion, that the Oxford " Press was prior to Caxton's; and thinks that those who have called " Mr. Caxton *the first printer in England*, and Leland in particular, meant " that he was the first who practised the art with fusile types, and con- " sequently first brought it to perfection. Which is not inconsistent " with Corsellis's having printed earlier at Oxford with *separate cut Types* " *in Wood*, which was the only method he had learnt at Harlem. The " speaking of Mr. Caxton as the first printer in England, in *this* sense of " the expression, is not irreconcileable with the story of Corsellis. These " facts and opinions being thus laid before the reader, he will judge " for himself, concerning their truth or probability, the disputants on " both sides have agreed in one position, which will be easily assented " to, namely, that it is very unsafe to trust to common history; and ne- " cessary to recur to original testimonies, if we would know the state of " facts with exactness." *Burrows' Reports, vol.* iv. *p.* 2417, *ed. Lond.* 1776.

*E'en to this day his house a Chapel calls.*

*Page* 17.

The title of CHAPEL to the internal regulations of a printing office, originated in Caxton's exercising the profession in one of the chapels in Westminster Abbey, and may be considered as an additional proof, from the antiquity of the custom, of his being the first English Printer. In extensive houses, where many workmen are employed, the *Calling a Chapel*, is a business of very great importance; and generally takes place, when a member of the office has a complaint to allege against any of his fellow workmen, the first intimation of which he makes to the *Father of the Chapel*, usually the oldest printer in the house, who, should he conceive that the charge can be substantiated, and the injury supposed to have been received, is of such magnitude as to call for the interference of the law, summonses the members of the Chapel before him at the

*Imposing-Stone*, and there receives the allegations and the defence, in solemn assembly, and dispenses justice with typographical rigour and impartiality. These trials, though they are sources of neglect of business, and other irregularities, often afford scenes of genuine humour. The punishment generally consists in the criminal providing a libation, by which the offended workmen may wash away the stain that his misconduct has left upon the body at large. Should the plaintiff not be able to substantiate his charge, the fine then falls upon himself, for having maliciously arraigned his companion, a mode of practice which is marked with the features of sound policy, as it never loses sight of *The good of the Chapel.*

*Learn thou Bodoni in Italian realms.*

*Page* 20.

The extraordinary beauty of many of the works which have been executed by BODONI at PARMA, justly entitle him to rank with the most celebrated printers of the present day; nor can it be overlooked, that his labours have given a stimulus even to English exertion. In such estimation has his Press been held throughout Europe, that authors in distant countries, who were anxious to have their works introduced to the public in a handsome dress, have transmitted them to his care, under all the disadvantages attendant upon being printed from under their own eye, and in a foreign nation. Before the late successful efforts in England to bring printing to perfection, instances have occurred, when we have ourselves paid this humiliating tribute to Italian excellence. The knowledge of this circumstance, is of itself sufficient to silence the outcry against the splendid manner in which some of our printers have succeeded in wiping away this national stain. It is certainly a labour as commendable, to adorn with all the graces of art, the productions of the mind, which are intended to be eternal, as it is to decorate with so much care, the transitory forms of personal beauty. The real sources of the injury which literature has sustained in this country, and of the impediments to the diffusion of knowledge, are found in the various restrictions which

Government have imposed upon the Press, and in the destructive influence of unsparing taxation.

*Nor Didot less—whom France is proud to own.*

*Page* 20.

The celebrated inventor of Stereotype Printing in France, which Earl Stanhope is now assiduously endeavouring to introduce into these kingdoms.

*Now register'd—now ticketed we move,*
*Our slightest works the double label prove.*

*Page* 25.

To Mr. Pitt the Printers of this country are indebted for many instances of attention to their regular conduct and good morals, and for his kind desire to have an intimate acquaintance with the whole of the fraternity; but for none of his favors ought they to be so sincerely thankful, as for that by which they are compelled to affix their names to the beginning and ending of their works, whatever their size, and almost without any reference to the subject. The effects of this injunction, as far as it operates to the destruction of beauty in our art, are distinguishable in those works of national ornament, which, in consequence of the great expense to the purchaser, as well as to the proprietor, are obliged to be issued in small portions or numbers.—When these undertakings are brought to a conclusion, and collected together, as the work is turned over, the *printer's name, and his place of abode*, obtrude upon the eye *twice* for every number of which the work is composed—an embellishment we may very properly designate by the title of *Mr. Pitt's Mark.* Some of our celebrated brethren, to avoid the penalties incurred by a violation of this law, and at the same time to preserve the beauty of their labours from the effects of this Vandal invention—have been at the trouble and expense in some instances, to print this badge of their subjection on slips of paper, and attach them slightly to the bottom of those pages upon which they are directed by the act to print them, in order that they may be removed when the volume is bound: a mode of evasion which I am inclined to think

would not exonerate them on a trial, from the operation of this law. This proceeding seems to have originated either in a bigot rage against the Liberty of the Press—or in a desire to harass and alarm the Printer, the penalties being so heavy and so indiscriminate. We here contemplate the author of this Bill in the character of an enraged gladiator, who assails without affection or remorse, both his enemies and his friends—but he may blush to perceive, from the experience of a few years, notwithstanding the frequent and unavoidable breaches of this act, that even the unprincipled horde of common informers, seem ashamed to profit by the penalties of this unprecedented law.

# DESCRIPTIVE REFERENCES TO THE ENGRAVINGS.

## TITLE PAGE.

Wisdom, summoned by the Angel of Death, delivers to Posterity his Intellectual Treasures.
Motto—*Immortalitati.*

## BEGINNING OF THE PREFACE.

### THE UNVEILING OF MIND.

*And as the rays of morning's golden eye*
*Streak with resplendent light the eastern sky,*
*So with mild beam the sun of learning rose,*
*That round us now a noontide lustre throws.*

*Poem, p. 5.*

## END OF THE PREFACE.

### TIME AND OBLIVION.

*The trackless age with rapid pinion flew,*
*And drop'd the veil that clos'd the distant view.*

*Poem, p. 3.*

## LARGE DESIGN.

### THE AWAKING OF SCIENCE.

(The Fathers of Printing, at the command of Science, display their invention to the studious, and explain its principles—Reason and Imagination seem delighted with the discovery—A Scribe, seated on the ground, beholds his labours superseded.)

*Now Science, rising from her trance profound,*
*Benignant calls her numerous children round;*
*As study wills—commands them to impart,*
*The secret means that shew her wondrous art.*

*Poem, p. 6.*

## BEGINNING OF THE POEM.

### GENIUS MOURNING OVER THE RUINS OF ART.

*Whilst Genius pensive sat—in thought profound,*
*Mourning the spoils of ages scatter'd round.*

*Poem, p. 3.*

## END OF THE POEM.

### MIND, PROTECTED BY THE GENIUS OF PRINTING.

*Man unreluctant meets the general doom,*
*His Mind embalm'd, defies th' o'erwhelming tomb,*
*Lives in fresh vigour thro' succeeding years,*
*Nor yields its powers whilst nature guides the spheres.*

*Poem, p. 4.*

BEGINNING OF THE NOTES.

AGE CARRYING AWAY THE ARTS.

Motto—*Vale! Vale!*

*Man knew no means to hold the flitting race*
*Of art's coy forms, that courted his embrace.*

*Poem, p. 2.*

END OF THE NOTES.

EMBLEM OF THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS, THE GUARDIAN OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN.

*Be free our Press as Heaven's enlivening gale!*

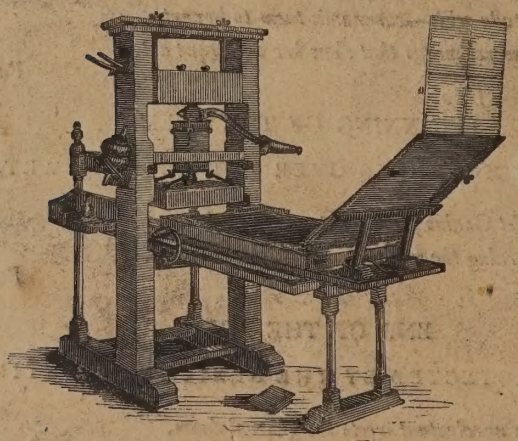
*Poem, p. 21.*

ON THIS PAGE.

A PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF THE PRESS AT WHICH THIS WORK WAS PRINTED.

*And as his art a nobler effort made,*
*The sweeping lever his commands obey'd;*
*Elastic balls the sable stains supply;*
*Light o'er the form the sheeted tympans fly,*
*The beauteous work returning leaves unfold,*
*As with alternate force the axle roll'd.*

*Poem, p. 13.*



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